

# The Classical Bulletin

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Vol. V

DECEMBER, 1928

No. 3

## Moral Training Through the Classics

Moral perfection is the aim of a Christian life. Training in moral perfection must therefore be the primary end of every Christian system of education. It is in accordance with this simple principle that the *Ratio Studiorum* insists imperatively on the need of fostering true Christian piety in our students while they are under our care. A glance at the first rule laid down for the guidance of the Prefect of Studies shows to what an extent training in character is supposed by the *Ratio* to enter into the duties of the classical teacher: "Advancement not only in the fine arts, but also in integrity of life"—such is the key-note of the whole body of directions bearing on this subject. And here, as elsewhere, if striking results are expected, the teacher's undivided efforts must be brought to the task of developing moral perfection in his pupils. If in the view of the ancient Romans no one could be a good orator unless he were also a *bonus vir*, can the Christian teacher of the Classics set himself a lower standard in his exalted profession?

In his hints to teachers Fr. Saecchini says that "the classical authors, pagan though they are, can be turned into evangelists of Christ, not indeed by seeking mystical interpretations of the thought of the ancients, but by extolling the virtues which they recommend, and censuring their false principles; by treating with respect the noble traits of character which the ancients mention, and condemning the bad; by culling beautiful maxims from their pages and impressing them on the pupils for practical use, as occasion may demand." The same writer advises that neat phrases and figures of speech be selected from the author read in class and expressed in the vernacular conformably to our modern ways of speaking, so as to clothe in them a moral or pious suggestion. Père Jouvancy recommends that the material for theme-work in Latin be chosen at times with reference to vocational subjects, inspiring incidents, and even downright devotional topics. As a skilful educator, he cautions the teacher against excessive zeal in so delicate a matter. Moral lessons are the last flowering of ancient thought; consequently the more spontaneously they spring from matter seen in class, the more gently and deeply will they sink into the youthful mind.

Teaching the Classics with a view to the moral improvement of our pupils is liable to be neglected for

various reasons. Some teachers fear that such instruction looks "too much like preaching," and that their pupils do not expect to be sermonized while reading Latin or Greek. The regular chapel service (so teachers and students hold), will serve that purpose well enough. Other teachers feel handicapped by a sense of inability to seize the natural opportunities for insistence on moral principles; for they rightly say that unless the opportunity for their inculcation in the classroom is perfectly natural, it becomes a nuisance and bores instead of edifying the student. Still others think that a great many of the topics suggested by the Latin authors are above the heads of high-school pupils, as, for instance, their views on the spirituality of the soul.

In reply I may quote a few words from a letter which I have through the kindness of a friend. It is from a former student to his teacher and is, I think, quite to the point. "One of the features of your teaching," he says, "that appealed very much to me, as I know it did to the rest of the class, was your custom of seizing upon some point in the Latin and Greek author and developing it into an informal talk of a philosophic or moral nature. I am sure that our interest was not due to the interruption these talks afforded in the regular grind of class-work. It was due to the fact that you were answering some of the problems that were already in our minds, or that you were giving us new points of view of life. I remember, for instance, that one day you developed the idea that self-consciousness was at the bottom of both the strength and the weakness of Cicero's character: it was his strength, because it made him realize that he had a part to play in Roman life which no one else could take; it was his weakness, because he did not control it, and allowed himself to think too much of the glory that his work would bring to himself. This was a light to me at the time and proved very helpful many a time afterward, for I had never heard anyone speak of self-consciousness as anything but a defect and a hindrance. Another point was that Caesar sought to attain greatness by making Rome great—a plausible mode of action at first sight, but untenable upon further investigation, because he made Rome the footstool of his own ambition. I think that you brought this to bear on the subject of vocation. More important than all this were, of course, the Christian and spiritual turns you gave to originally pagan ideas." To quote from another letter: "The better work," states a former student who is at present in close touch with

modern methods, "was done in former days, when teachers taught us Latin and Greek with a view to instilling principles and high ideals. Today the eagerness seems to be to fill the minds of boys with learning, rather than to develop character." This may be an exaggerated statement, yet it throws at least a glimmer of light on the often unnoticed efforts of teachers who are in quest of an ideal in their difficult profession.

But how will teachers find the opportunity best suited to such inspiring talks as these correspondents mention? It is certainly a fallacy to think that it will take care of itself. Nothing that is worth while doing takes care of itself. And there is all the more need of careful preparation in making the old pagans available for lessons in character training, because we are not here dealing with a regular round of catechetical instructions, in which the thread may be taken up at any point, wherever it has been dropped in the preceding lesson. What the *Ratio* and common sense insist upon in enforcing moral training in the Greek or Latin class is the development of the student's mind and character through a thorough explanation of the author. It is this explanation of the pagan writer that stands in the center of the classical teacher's interest and claims the foremost share in his preparation for class. Moreover, different teachers have to deal with different kinds of students, and the personal interests, aspirations, environment and ideals of one's own students must be carefully kept in view. Last of all, different authors and their writings require different treatment. In Caesar opportunity is readily found for attaching moral or spiritual reflections to phrases or sentences, while lengthier talks on moral or spiritual topics may at times be suggested by Caesar's life and purposes, and by larger incidents narrated in his Commentaries. Cicero will yield a crop of the most fertile opportunities in connection with the subject matter of entire speeches, or his artistic mode of expression, or especially, with his treatises on philosophical and ethical subjects. Everyone who has read Cicero extensively is struck by the large number of exquisite passages that would do honor to any Christian writer, passages which are none the less like gems because certain key-words, as *deus* or *animus*, are employed by the pagan philosopher in a far from Christian sense. Vergil was a great favorite in the Middle Ages and one of the causes of his vogue then were his apt reflections on the wide range of human life with all its joys and sorrows. As someone has said: "A teacher is simply not teaching Vergil if he passes up the 'lonely' words that say so much about human nature."

In teaching the Classics with an eye to the moral training of our students, we are but following out to their last consequences the methods of the great Roman educators of old, who set their pupils "to write aphorisms, moral essays and delineations of character," with this difference in our favor, that the pagans viewed human character in the light of mere human nature, while we are able to study even its finer nuances in the

light of that supernatural revelation which Christ has given us.

Omaha, Nebr.

FRANCIS G. DEGLMAN, S. J.

### The Fine Art of Writing Obscurely

We are accustomed to regard the Greek and Latin writers as masters of a perfect style. We may perhaps be shocked to learn that some ancient writers deliberately cultivated the writing of obscure prose as an art.

In discussing the qualities of style, Quintilian (VIII, ii, 12 sqq.) mentions clearness as the first requisite of all good writing. He goes on to explain the various ways in which an author may obscure his meaning and make his composition a puzzle rather than a pleasure to the reader. Those who are acquainted with Horace's *Ars Poetica* will recall a line in which the poet traces obscurity of diction to a desire for brevity:

*Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio.*

Quintilian, too, is aware that brevity not infrequently leads to obscurity. There are those, he says, who "in their zeal for brevity" (*brevitatem aemulati*), omit words that are necessary to the sense. Such persons, says Quintilian, if indeed they know their own meaning, do not care a straw whether others catch the sense or not. Their obscurity of style, therefore, is due to their "complete indifference" to the needs of their readers. One may ask what motive they have for writing at all. For my own part, Quintilian says, I regard as useless all talk or composition that makes "such a demand on the ingenuity of the hearer." Another literary critic, Demetrius, in his treatise *On Style*, explains why excessive terseness fails in clearness; "for, as men who race past us are sometimes indistinctly seen, so the meaning of a sentence may, owing to its hurried movement, be only imperfectly caught."

Obscurity in writing, we are again informed, may result from too lavish a use of obsolete words, as, for instance, if an author were to search the archives of the *Pontifices*, or the earliest treatises, or the works of long-forgotten writers. It may be admitted that an employment of obsolete words will at times serve a good purpose, as in legal parlance; but Quintilian complains that the archives were sometimes searched with the deliberate design of collecting words that no living man understood. There are those, he continues, who seek to make a reputation for erudition by such means as this, their ultimate motive being to appear to be "the sole depositaries of certain forms of knowledge."

The flaws of the writers censured may seem to be fairly typical; they certainly are very human, for everywhere and at all times writers are tempted to yield to a craving for excessive brevity, or even perhaps to a desire of appearing profound and recondite.

But we are told further that there were writers in Quintilian's time who introduced "a horde of empty, meaningless words." These authors had a horror of the ordinary methods of expression. "They are allured by false ideals of beauty," in Dr. Butler's fine phrase, "and wrap up everything in a multitude of words simply and

solely because they are unwilling to make a direct and simple statement of the facts." And not content with this, they link up and involve one of those long-winded clauses with others like it, and extend their periods to a length "beyond the compass of mortal breath." Furthermore some spend an infinity of toil to acquire this vice, "which, by the way, is nothing new: for I learn from the pages of Livy that there was once a teacher, who taught his pupils to make all they said obscure, using the Greek word *σκότισον*," ("muddle it up").

That such deliberate "muddling" was not merely an idiosyncrasy of the teacher referred to by Livy, is clear from Quintilian's further observation that this same habit gave rise to the familiar words of praise, "*Tanto melior; ne ego quidem intellexi*." One is reminded of the remark made by a pious lady after listening to a famous orator: "I did not understand what he said, but it was certainly grand." The remark may evoke a smile, but the observant Demetrius, whom I quoted above, would be slow to condemn it outright as silly; for, "strange though it may seem," he says, "even obscurity often produces force, since what is distantly hinted, is more forcible, while what is plainly stated is held cheap." It is well known that Edmund Burke expresses similar views on the relation between obscurity and sublimity.

The lucubrations of those gloomy, midnight workers who made a fine art of writing obscurely have not come down to us, and it is idle to fancy what they must have looked like. They cause us no worry. And yet Quintilian's discussion of their unlovely methods may perhaps point a little lesson. We are wont to speak of the Classics as a unit, but they are not a true, not a perfectly homogeneous unit. Like the net mentioned in Scripture, the "Classics," as generally understood, is a wide and generous term that admits good authors alike and bad. But even within that narrower circle of truly reputable ancient writers whose success in literature has stamped them as superior models of excellence, worthy of the admiration of posterity, and whose works are studied in the classroom, the level of excellence is not the same, and the teacher has an opportunity now and then to explain that, while all these writers are good, it does not follow that all are equally good. In narrative prose, for instance, Nepos is not in the same class with Livy or Caesar. In one and the same writer, moreover, excellent passages may appear side by side with others that are wanting in perfection. Vergil has lines that fascinate, mingling with others that leave us cold. And may it not be possible that even in a better writer an occasional obscure phrase or line is half consciously due to a desire to darken the sense rather than make it clear?

Be this as it may, writers are not always at their best, and although there is much that the student can learn from the ancient art of composition, his admiration for the ancient masters should be discriminating. The ancient literary critics themselves, like Aristotle, Deme-

trius, Quintilian, speak freely of what they consider the faults of even the greatest writers of antiquity. "The reader must not jump to the conclusion," says Quintilian, "that all that was uttered by the best authors is necessarily perfect. At times they lapse and stagger beneath the weight of their task, indulge their bent or relax their efforts. Cicero thinks that Demosthenes sometimes nods, and Horace says the same even of Homer. For despite their greatness, they are still but mortal men, and it will sometimes happen that their reader . . . imitates their defects (and it is always easier to do this than to imitate their excellences) and thinks himself a perfect replica if he succeeds in copying the blemishes of great men."

Quintilian closes his comment on obscurity of style with this fine remark: "For my own part, I regard clearness as the first essential of a good style: there must be propriety in our words, their order must be straightforward, the conclusion of the period must not be long-postponed, there must be nothing lacking and nothing superfluous. Thus our language will be approved by the learned and be clear to the uneducated."

St. Louis, Mo.

JAMES A. KLEIST, S. J.

### Question Box

In teaching Greek, would you advise teaching the conjugations and declensions according to the analytic method, i. e. by showing how the noun and verb are composed of stem and endings, how certain consonants are dropped before other consonants, how contraction takes place after certain letters have been omitted? Or would you advise the memorizing of the forms as such, thinking perhaps that the minds of boys would be confused by the analytic method?

X.

On the supposition that there is question of teaching Greek etymology not to children, but to high-school boys of from 15 to 17 years of age, it seems altogether desirable to teach the inflections scientifically, i. e., according to stems and endings. To do this, a complete technical terminology or the scientific classification of verb stems into T class, E class, Iod class, etc. is, of course, unnecessary, and may even be undesirable. But experience shows that a thorough foundation in etymology cannot be laid by mere rote-memorization of forms. It also shows that the teaching of Greek etymology according to stems and terminations, besides putting thoroughness into the work, adds an element of great interest to the pupil. Far from confusing his mind, the analytical method, judiciously used, is the best instrument for the rationalization and clarification of the teaching of grammar. It reduces the memory load to a minimum, facilitates the process of memorizing itself by making it intellectual, lays a solid foundation for extensive vocabulary building, is a good introduction to the study of derivatives from the Greek, and affords, besides, all the excellent training derived from the process of systematic classification as practiced in the study of the natural sciences.

F. A. P.



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To a thoughtful observer the present status of classical studies in this country must seem far from satisfactory. Never, perhaps, was so much energy expended in the field with such meagre educational results. There is, indeed, a large body of eminent classical scholars working in our universities and colleges. There is a still larger body of classical instructors teaching Latin in the high schools. Within the ranks of the learners, besides a relatively small group of young men and women studying the classics in college and university, there is an imposing army of boys and girls devoting some part of their time to Latin in the secondary schools. The professors in the seats of higher learning are doing excellent work in the field of exact scholarship. The secondary teachers are zealously exploiting every pedagogical device to interest their pupils in Latin, and every conceivable argument to prove its usefulness to parents and pupils alike. But what is the effect of it all upon the young people who are ostensibly receiving a classical education?

In the colleges there are those who are looking forward to the classics as their life-work; and the interests of these are often narrowly professional. Of the rest who are studying the classics in college, the majority have a very inadequate foundation in grammar and a very insufficient familiarity with Latin and Greek vocabulary and idiom, to enable them to enjoy the reading of the classical authors and draw from them their finest values. Moreover, the interest of this latter group in the deeper problems of literature and life—problems which can be studied so admirably in the great writers

of Greece and Rome—is usually on a par with their intellectual interests generally; which is tantamount to saying that it is very superficial.

In the high schools Greek, to begin with, is studied very little; in most of them not at all. In the next place, both Latin and Greek are begun too late. The age of ten to twelve is surely not too soon to begin the arduous task of acquiring the Latin and Greek declensions and conjugations; and yet our high-school students do not begin that task until the age of fourteen to sixteen. Again, a very large proportion of those who take up Latin in high school do not carry the subject for more than two years. As far as high school teachers are concerned, eagerness to interest boys and girls in Latin leads many of them to dispense with the hard grammatical drill which is absolutely indispensable to subsequent success. The same motive induces many others to turn their Latin classes into laboratories and museums by the excessive use of extrinsic and material helps, which, in the end, serve only to distract the interest of the learner from the language and literature he is supposed to be studying. An aiming, on the part of teachers, at the so-called "practical" values of Latin study has oftentimes an equally disastrous effect upon the progress of the student in his mastery of the fundamentals of etymology and syntax. Furthermore, too little time is devoted to Latin and Greek at the very beginning of the course. The best classical tradition has always held that Latin should be made the core and soul of the curriculum, and that one period a day during the first year of its study is wholly inadequate. Present-day practice in our high schools, on the contrary, makes Latin just one of four or five independent, equally important, and often utterly uncorrelated subjects. Inadequate training in Latin prose composition and insufficient mastery of the language and literature on the part of high-school teachers, are other prevalent shortcomings.

What, then, seems to be most needed to improve the situation? First of all, a realization that all the exact scholarship in the world will not of itself bring about the improvement desired. We have abundance of productive scholarship. More humanism, not more specialization, is what is needed: liberally educated men and women, with broad human sympathies, wide and appreciative reading in the literatures of Greece and Rome, a deep interest in the great problems of life, more concern, in their teaching, about the beauties of thought and expression, and the elemental experiences, ideals and emotions of humanity, which are to be found in classical literature, than about the refinements of scholarship; above all, a genuine zeal to *train* the young, to form their taste, to inspire them with lofty ideals of conduct, to give them broader views of life, to enlarge their human sympathies.

The classics have proved themselves an excellent instrument for the imparting of a liberal education. They will not, however, succeed in imparting it to our own

generation, if taught by specialists whom specialization has narrowed and dehumanized; for whom accuracy of fact means more than knowledge of human nature; in whose eyes an original contribution, however slight, to the sum total of linguistic or historical knowledge, is of greater importance than the initiation of the young into the great problems of existence and the appreciation of poetic truth and beauty. Nor will the classics impart a liberal education if studied superficially and only for a short period; or if their study lacks the foundation of a rigorous grammatical discipline. To fulfill their function in education, Latin and Greek must first be thoroughly taught and thoroughly mastered as languages. Then, under the guidance of cultured men and women who are *real teachers*, the sweetness and the strength that lies imbedded in the masterpieces of ancient literature must be sympathetically drawn forth and assimilated. To achieve this end in college, strict departmental teaching, narrow specialization, rigorous classification of courses into upper and lower divisions, insistence upon rating all work by credit hours, examinations by individual courses and semesters, mathematical computation of majors and minors, inflexible science and mathematics requirements for the A. B. degree, and other such contrivances of modern educationism, are more often hindrances than helps. We classical teachers of today are, indeed, the victims of an unfortunate system. But if we are inspired with the genuine spirit of humanism, each one of us will, in spite of untoward circumstances, do excellent work and exert a wholesome and a lasting influence within our own limited sphere of activity, be it in high school or in college; and thus we may perhaps hope to contribute, be it never so little, towards making the future of classical studies in American high schools and colleges a little brighter than it appears at present.

#### Book Reviews

**A History of Christian Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages.** By F. J. E. Raby. Pp. 491. Oxford University Press, American Branch, 1927. \$7.00.

This truly handsome volume of nearly 500 pages deserves a more detailed appreciation than can be accorded to it in this BULLETIN. The author does well to view the development of Christian Latin poetry in the light of contemporary history, and skilfully interweaves the finer threads of medieval poetry with the broader lines of the intellectual and social growth of the times. By means of generous quotation he enables the reader to follow the process of development of Christian Latin verse and to feel for himself the quality of that poetical attainment.

The author regards his work as "a mere outline of a great and difficult subject," as "a voyage of discovery in what was, for him, an almost unknown country." But even this "attempt" has its value, for it is the first

literary history of the medieval Latin poets to appear in our language. Here at last the prejudice clinging around the humanist tradition of the French critics has been courageously shaken off. The author is willing to judge each Christian poet on his merits. As a proof of this I may cite the fact that he genuinely admires the literary merit of Prudentius and gives to the much-misunderstood and generally misrepresented Venantius Fortunatus the place he deserves.

The field of medieval Latin poetry is immense and it must cause small surprise if perhaps the shadows and lights in this vast picture are not evenly divided. Thus too much prominence is given to the isolated hymn of St. Augustine which is not poetry at all and has had little or no influence on the course of Christian hymnody. The chapter on St. Ambrose, the father of hymnody, corrects the impression of Augustine's importance only partially. Again Commodian's work was practically unknown and condemned by the Church for unorthodox feeling; it may be looked upon as a sporadic effort.

Mr. Raby's lack of the straightforward Christian viewpoint has unfortunately played havoc with his honest effort to see things medieval as they were. Christian poetry was nothing if not a magnificent homage to Christ the King both human and divine; but the author, in his interesting chapter on the "Beginnings," gives his unqualified assent to the modern rationalistic assumption that the divinity of Christ is not an original Christian doctrine, but a later Hellenistic evolution. Again, one does not see the relevancy of his attributing to Fortunatus "erotic mysticism." Nor, again, did St. Bernard and St. Francis bring a *new personal element* into Catholicism, nor did they *rediscover* in the Savior a human figure who was the center of the Christian hope. The personal note in the Christian's love for Christ has a deeper foundation than one would gather from Mr. Raby's statement nor had it ever disappeared from the Church. Perhaps acquaintance with, say, Cuthbert Butler's *Western Mysticism* might have saved the author from his misconceptions. Mr. Raby's book shows immense erudition and the discerning reader will thank him for it.

St. Louis, Mo.

OTTO J. KUHNMUENCH, S. J.

**Voadica, A Romance of the Roman Wall.** By Ian C. Hannah, F. S. A. Longmans, Green and Co., New York. Pp. x + 273. 1928. \$2.00.

Readers of Tacitus' *Agricola* will welcome this entertaining romance. It is a clever defense of the methods of Roman imperialism in Britain under Hadrian. The words of Tacitus might serve as a summary: *Inde etiam habitus nostri honor, et frequens toga, paulatimque discessum ad delinimenta vitiorum, porticus et balnea et convivorum elegantiam; idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, quum pars servitutis esset.* Not the *aquila* but the *balnea* conquered the barbarian.

The plot of the story is well conceived; the action is rapid and full of interesting improbabilities. The writer

is alive to, and in sympathy with, the spirit of Rome's legions in their stupendous and irresistible advance to the remotest boundaries of the barbarian world.

The tournament at Trimontium is described in the colorful and thrilling phrases of Scott's *Ivanhoe* and *Talisman*. The games in the Coliseum are portrayed in the style of *Ben Hur*. No pity or regrets are expressed for the helpless and discordant natives, slowly but surely shackled by the ruthless conqueror. Civilization in terms of elegant dress, comfortable dwellings, sanitary environment, luxurious baths and exciting games, appears justified and admirable.

Whether Voadica, the untamed Caledonian firebrand, granddaughter of Boudicca, would know Rome's history and traditions so thoroughly, or speak and understand the language of Cato and Hadrian so perfectly, must be left to the novelist. The reader is expected to see the dead past live again in the pageantry of life in the distant British frontier garrisons eighteen centuries ago. *Florissant, Mo.*

WILLIAM A. PADBERG, S. J.

### The Dreaded Latin Participle

The use of the participle as a substitute for a dependent clause has always been a bugbear for high-school students. The following is not an attempt to offer anything new or startling; everything contained in it can be found under separate headings in almost any grammar. I wish merely to present in an orderly and synthetic manner a few fundamental facts, the knowledge of which will help the student to overcome his dread of the participle and to use this form of the verb with a sense of assurance.

I need not stop to say that the dependent clause, as a substitute for which the Latin participle may be used, can denote condition, opposition, time, cause, attendant circumstance, manner, etc. The essential thing in all these clauses is the fact that the Latin participle denotes *relative time*; i. e. it takes its time from that of the main verb; it is relatively past or present (prior or contemporaneous). It is this fact that must be thoroughly mastered before the student can use the participle correctly.

Consequently, the first "categorical imperative" addressed to the student must be:

**LOOK FOR THE RELATIVE TIME.** Is the time of the dependent clause *contemporaneous* with, or *prior* to, the action of the main verb?

1. *If contemporaneous*, see whether the verb is active or passive.

- a. *If active*, use the present participle.

(If the subject of the dependent clause refers to any word in the main clause, make the participle agree with that word in gender, number, and case.):

"While we talked we looked out of the window: *Loquentes per fenestram prospiciebamus.*"

(If the subject of the dependent clause does *not* refer to any word in the main clause, use the ablative absolute construction):

"While Augustus ruled, all arts flourished: *Augusto regnante omnes artes florebant.*"

- b. *If passive*: as the present participle is always active in sense, there is no room for a participial construction, and a clause must be used as in English.

"As long as the people were being ruled by Nero, they were discontented: *Cives, dum a Nerone regebantur, male contenti erant.*"

N. B. Very often the passive verb in the English dependent clause may be turned back into the active without change of sense; as "while Nero ruled, the people were discontented." Then, of course, a present participle may be used: "*Nerone regnante cives male contenti erant.*"

2. *If prior*, see whether the verb is deponent, intransitive, or transitive. Here either the perfect participle is used, or none at all.

- a. *Deponent* verbs have a perfect participle with active meaning.

(N. B. If the subject . . . etc., as in 1, a):

"After saying this, he left: *Haec locutus abiit.*"

(N. B. If the subject does *not* refer, etc., as in 1, a):

"On the death of Augustus, Tiberius became emperor: *Augusto mortuo, Tiberius imperator factus est.*"

- b. *Intransitive* verbs (also, transitive verbs used *absolutely*, i. e. without an object expressed): with these verbs the participial construction is out of the question.

"Having injured his friend, he ran away: *Postquam amico suo nocuit, ipse fugit.*"

"After plowing, a farmer sows his seed: *Postquam aravit, agricola serit.*" (Aro is a transitive verb used absolutely.)

- c. *Transitive* verbs (with object expressed): if active, first change to the passive.

(N. B. If the subject, etc., as in 1, a):

"After the city was taken, they entered it: *Urbem captam intraverunt.*"

(N. B. If it does *not* refer, etc., as in 1, a):

"When the city was taken, they fled: *Urbe capta fugerunt.*"

To sum up. All that has just been said at some length, may now, to aid the student's memory, be thrown into a diagram:

*Can I use the participle at all?*

*Contemporaneous* time: present participle:

Active verb, YES. Passive verb, NO.

*Prior* time: perfect participle:

Deponent and active verbs, YES.

Transitive verb with object, YES.

Intransitive (or trans. without obj.), NO.

I have stressed in the above outline the necessity of noting the relation of time between the dependent and the main clause; for, if this relation of time is not carefully observed, the student will be tempted to use a present participle instead of a perfect, and vice versa. As may be seen, to some extent at least, from the few examples given, English idiom would often lead him into error, were he to accept it as his guide in translating



sentences into Latin. For instance, in the sentence given above we may, correctly and in full accord with English idiom, say, "After *saying* this, he left." With the English as his guide, the student would use the present participle in Latin, where, as a matter of fact, the perfect participle must be used, since the act of speaking preceded that of leaving. There are many other differences of this nature between English and Latin idiom, which will cause confusion to the student, unless he develops the habit of looking for relative time.

St. Louis, Mo.

HENRY W. LINN, S. J.

### Reading Latin

(The fifth of a series of articles, continued from the February number.)

In the previous articles of this series, I showed how a pupil can be trained to deal with the accusative and ablative cases in the process of reading Latin as Latin. I shall now indicate how the same principles may be applied to the genitive and dative cases and to subordinate clauses.

The first thing to be noted about the genitive case is that it is usually employed to join a noun with some other noun, or, occasionally, with an adjective. Its use with verbs is too rare to merit attention here. Upon meeting with a genitive case, especially when it precedes its governing word, the pupil is to be taught to think to himself: "This noun calls for some other noun or an adjective, with which it is closely connected." This connection he need not stop to analyze at once; it is enough to know that the two words in question are to be united to form a single idea. These two elements are joined in English by the possessive ending 's, by the preposition *of*, by some other preposition, as *for*, *from*, *against*, etc., and very frequently by mere juxtaposition, with or without a hyphen, to form a compound noun or adjective, e. g. *nivis casus*, "snow-storm." The last of these methods of joining words is very important. First of all, it often suggests the very best translation of a genitive phrase, e. g. *auri cupidus*, "money-mad;" *honoris petitis*, "office-seeking;" *vectigalium exactor*, "tax-gatherer." Secondly, even when the corresponding compound word in English is indefensible, the Latin genitive phrase should be looked upon as a compound; thus, though "death-flight" and "crime-free" would not do as English renderings of *mortis fuga*, "flight from death," and *sceleris expers*, "innocent of crime," yet the Latin phrases should be thought of as *mort-fuga* and *sceler-expers*. Once the pupil grasps the idea that the genitive ending is often nothing but a Latin hyphen, his mastery of this case in reading will not be limited by his available stock of English equivalents.

In the first article of this series, it was stated that generically the dative case indicates the person who is interested in the action which is to follow, or the person (or thing) with reference to whom the action is performed. This idea of reference is often, though not always, capable of being expressed in English by the prepositions *to* and *for*, and these words may be used as keys to the

situation, provided that the pupil regards them as symbols for the larger and more general idea of interest or reference. From this more comprehensive point of view, it will be seen that the mysterious ethical dative really partakes of the fundamental force of the dative case, for it represents any kind of interest, often emotional, which the person takes in the action portrayed by the verb. In such cases the English prepositions *to* and *for* are very misleading. Some teachers may wish to explain on this referential basis the dative that follows certain intransitive verbs, but it will doubtless be more practical to teach the pupil to entertain the expectation of a possible dative-verb along with the idea of interest or reference, without insisting on a co-ordination of the two possibilities. It will be found helpful to tell the pupil that, where the form of a word may stand for either dative or ablative, he should tentatively think of it as dative if the word denotes a person, and as ablative if it denotes a thing.

The blackboard work for the dative will not differ materially from that used for the accusative. Write the word *Puero* on the blackboard and get the reaction, "The boy was interested in something that happened." Follow it with *pater*, which will mean that the father was responsible for the action that aroused the boy's interest. Next comes the word *librum*, which makes it probable that the boy is interested in something that the father did to the book. Then ask for a probable verb. This may turn out to be *dedit*, *ademit*, *servavit*, or *combussit*, etc. There is no need here to talk of indirect object, dative of separation, of advantage or disadvantage. Such distinctions may be reserved for the grammar class. Here it is enough to know that "the boy is interested."

My exposition of this natural method of reading would not be complete unless I had a word to say about the treatment of dependent clauses introduced by subordinating conjunctions. It is true that pupils are soon familiarized with the English equivalents of these conjunctions, but it is doubtful whether they clearly understand the force of these connectives even in English. Ask your pupils to tell you the meaning of *since*, *although*, *when*, etc., and the answer will undoubtedly be nothing but a sentence illustrating the use of the word in question. Ask what relation exists between the two clauses which are joined by these particles, and your pupils will not understand what you mean. Unless they do understand this relationship in a more conscious and explicit way, these conjunctions will mean very little to them in Latin as a means of forecasting the nature of the sentence which they are attempting to read.

The point which I wish to make is this. When a pupil meets the word *quamquam* in a Latin sentence, he should think to himself: "This word *quamquam* tells me that the author is about to make two statements. The first statement will incline me to believe that the second cannot be true, and yet it will be true." When he meets *quamvis*: "Now I am to face a supposition and a statement. It does not matter much whether the supposition is true or not; the statement is going to stand." For

quoniam he will say: "Here come two facts. The first will prove to be the reason for the truth of the second." When he meets *cum* and realizes that it cannot be a preposition, he will say: "The author is going to make two assertions, which are connected in some way or other. I shall not be able to tell what the connection is until I find out what the assertions are. The first may be the cause of the second, the second may be true in spite of the first, or they may both have merely happened at the same time." The pupil should be told that the conjunction *cum* has the same general force as the preposition *cum*; despite their difference in origin, they both denote connection or accompaniment; but while the one joins nouns, the other unites clauses. It may prove helpful to furnish the pupil with the following statistics: The conjunction *cum* has three ordinary meanings: *when*, *since* and *although*. Out of a hundred occurrences in Caesar, the chances are that it will mean *when* in 70 cases, *since* in 24 and *although* in 6. In Cicero the probabilities are: *when*, 60; *since*, 22, and *although*, 18. In Vergil *cum* nearly always means *when*.  
*Florissant, Mo.*

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### Communications

In the June issue an objection was raised against the translation of the prayer following the Litany of the Sacred Heart as 'being in one detail not true to the original.' The translation though a trifle inaccurate is not only justifiable, but the only one consonant with the structure and the spirit of the prayer.

The Latin:

"Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, respice in Cor dilectissimi Filii Tui et in laudes et satisfactiones, quas in nomine peccatorum Tibi persolvit, usque misericordiam Tuam petentibus Tu veniam concede placatus, in nomine ejusdem Filii Tui. . ."

"O Almighty and Eternal God, look upon the Heart of Thy dearly-beloved Son and upon the praises and satisfactions He offers Thee in the name of sinners, and being appeased grant pardon to those who seek Thy mercy, in the name of the same. . ."

Now to use an example—the last quoted by J. A. K.—to illustrate and justify the translation in question. To the words, *quid posset iis esse laetum, exitus suos cogitantibus*, (Cicero, in *Div.*, 2, 9), is given this translation: "What could have given joy to them when they thought of their end." But, the writer says, were *iis* dropped, the sense would be, "What could have given joy to those (to any) who thought of their end."

Let us apply this latter principle to the Latin of the prayer above. Drop the *iis* of the *usque misericordiam*, etc., i. e., sever any connection of *iis* with *petentibus*, and the translation, of an evident classical Latin clause, stands pat.

This is not done arbitrarily, for *iis* refers back to *Cor*, *laudes*, and *satisfactiones* and not to *peccatorum*. The spirit of the prayer, which is centered about the Heart, praises, and satisfactions of our Lord, seems to demand this construction. The prayer commences with the asking of Almighty God to look upon the Heart, praises,

and satisfaction of His Son, that, having divined their true and infinite value, He may be appeased by *them* and grant, etc. Moreover, the French version—as well as the German—brings out this point: ". . . Apaisé par ces divins hommages, pardonnez . . ."

Finally, as was mentioned above, the version, though true, is not wholly accurate, in so far as the word or means connoted by "appeased" are not mentioned as they are in the French. One reason, perhaps, may be that the original translator wished to avoid the unhappy juxtaposition of "these" and "those" which would have ensued on the explicit translation of *iis*.  
 H. C. J.

### Reply

The Latin of the prayer attached to the Litany of the Sacred Heart may be looked at in two ways, either with the eyes of the grammarian or with those of the stylist. It is evident that the participle *placatus* may be modified by *iis*. If so, the pronoun is in the ablative and refers back, as H. C. J. points out, to *Cor*, *laudes* and *satisfactiones* as the instruments of our redemption. God was appeased and reconciled with sinful man in view of the *laudes* and *satisfactiones* offered to Him by the Sacred Heart of the Redeemer. The idea is orthodox and the demands of grammar are satisfied. But the stylist is harder to please. Is it at all likely that the composer of the prayer wished *iis* to refer to such disparate "things" as the praises and satisfactions, on the one hand, and the Adorable Heart of the Savior, on the other? The critic quotes with approval a French translation, but the French translator was wiser. Shrinking, I suppose, from referring outright to the Sacred Heart, he merely brackets the praises and satisfactions with the phrase "*ces divins hommages*." And yet he had no right to omit reference to the *Cor*, for the Latin has this parallel construction for both: *respice in Cor et (respice) in laudes*. If *iis* refers to *laudes*, it should refer to *Cor* as well, as the critic also thinks.

There is another consideration. The stylist who reads Latin as Latin holds *iis* (dative? ablative?) in suspense until he finds a word to link it up with. Naturally this word is *petentibus*. Therefore in his mind he joins the two. But this mental operation is interfered with, and must be undone as soon as he sees *placatus*. For now *iis* is not dative with *petentibus*, but ablative with *placatus*. There is no objection to the use of the Hyperbaton (the separation of *placatus* from *iis* by several intervening words), but it may be difficult to find in Latin literature an instance of this rhetorical figure that almost necessarily leads the reader into error.

Until, therefore, the author of the prayer tells us how he wished *iis* to be understood, we shall be in a dilemma: either the English version is in one detail not true to the original (see the June issue of the BULLETIN) or the Latinity of the prayer is in one detail poor and defective. Many readers, no doubt, will prefer to honor the memory of the great composer of the prayer (the bishop of Marseilles?) by supposing that he was guided by a sure feeling for Latin style. I find that at least one French-writing theologian, Fr. Vermeersch, takes the same view.  
 J. A. K.



